18 September 1964

Colonel White:

     Attached is Mr. [ ] memorandum
explaining the results of our exploration of a DD/S
coordinator for electronic data processing which
you authorized before your vacation.

STAT

     I wish there were some other way of doing
this so that [ ] could remain in his present job
full time where he is needed, but I believe to get
the coordinator show on the road [ ] is the best
man to do it.

STAT

STAT

     Recommend your appointment of Mr. [ ]
as DD/S coordinator for electronic data processing.

STAT

VRT

24 SEP 1964

SEP 17 1964

Colonel White:

Some time ago Emmett Echols suggested to you that you designate someone on your staff to act as coordinator for electronic data processing matters among the Support components. Subsequent to the submission of Emmett's suggestion, we received copies of correspondence from each of the Support components responding to a request from the Office of Computer Services for estimates of requirements for computer service during the next two fiscal years. The substance of these memos seemed, superficially at least, to support the idea that a coordinator could perform a useful function. Just before you went on leave you gave permission for us to explore this further.
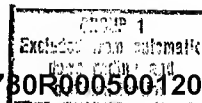
During your absence, I raised the question with representatives of each of the Support Offices except Finance in the context that the recommendations had been offered to you and we were interested in learning whether others might also think that it would serve a useful purpose. While I did not raise the question directly with the Head of the Office in any case, I did discuss it with people in the Offices who are concerned with the management of their data processing applications and who did assure me that they had discussed it with the Office Head before giving me their response. There is unanimous agreement that such an appointment would serve a useful and constructive purpose.

STAT

Because I had heard that the DD/S&T consultants on computer organization in the Agency were expected to issue their report during September, I called [   ] told him about this suggestion and what we were thinking about, and asked him whether he could tell at this time if the designation of an EDP coordinator on your staff would be consistent or inconsistent with the recommendations they expect to get. Jack assured me that it would be entirely consistent with the thinking of the consultants and, as a matter of fact, they might go a good deal further than that. Jack said that he would not be surprised by a recommendation that the hardware be centralized and everything else, i.e., systems and programming work, be completely decentralized. I understand the report is expected to be released by the consultant to the DD/S&T before the end of this week.

I did not raise this question with Mr. Fuchs or anyone in the Office of Finance because of his very strong feelings about the computer organization and my apprehension about becoming involved in a discussion in much broader terms than anything we are considering. I, therefore, left this for you.

GROUP 1
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downgrading and
declassification

SECRET

If you decide to do this, I would suggest that it be in addition to other duties until, if ever, it proves impractical. I should think we would want to avoid trying to define the function too specifically at first until we have enough experience to show us in what way it should be defined. We might offer it as a staff service to the components as well as a channel of management information to you and a means of access to you in the command capacity if, as, and when they need it.

We might start by an announcement at the DD/S Staff Meeting followed by a meeting of the people from all of the Offices who are working directly in the data processing applications as well as those who are responsible for their management if, in fact, they differ, at which time you might explain the action and its purpose. After that I would think that we would want a series of nuts and bolts briefings about everything each of the components is doing and has planned in this field. This latter series of briefings would be for the benefit of your coordinator and would be attended by only those other members of your staff who might be interested, but they would also be attended by the data processing people from each of the other components. After these briefings are completed, we will be in a better position to know whether the function requires further specific definition and, if it does, how.

RHW